

Late Night

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Category: Halo

Genre: Romance, Sci-Fi

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2012-12-12 00:36:38

Updated: 2013-04-16 17:56:50

Packaged: 2016-04-27 03:54:24

Rating: M

Chapters: 7

Words: 13,603

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Take's place during Halo 3: ODST, The story follow's Jim and his team, part of the Moonlighters 332 ODST he is sent into New Mombassa on a mission to eliminate any threat and rescue any survivors. Things change as he finds a new female sangheili companion in need of help. Update every other week or so. Please review

1. Chapter 1

Book: LATE NIGHT

Chapter 1

One hell of a place

"Emergency detach initiated," whined the electronic voice as the pod started to squealed from the pressure building up inside the pods hydraulic door.

As it shot out over the ledge and onto the street it made an ungodly noise that sounded like nails on a chalk board as it skidded down the tarmac towards an over turned school bus. "Finally, the damn thing opened," Jim sighed, as he started to stand up he look over the edge.

He noticed that he landed on top of a small balcony of a building, as he surveyed the area to get his bearings he rotated his body behind him and saw the destroyed letters which spelled, *Foreside Hotel*, "Looks like one hell of a place." Jim whispered jokingly to himself.

He than grab his M6S magnum and his AR5CQ which is shorter than a AR5 and has a shorter clip, after finally freeing his AR5CQ with a forceful tug, he began to walk behind his pod, as he dragged his hand across he felt the ceramic coating chewed away from the descent which made the ODST quiver.

This was his first mission where he went into a hot zone, and the pod was literally burning inside as he descended onto the earth.

He was the youngest in his platoon and his squad to have experience the worst-case scenario of the pod almost becoming fatally hot__.

As he ran his forefinger down the scorch marks on his pod, he started to thinking back to his days at boot camp when they were showed the videos of the problems that happen when the ceramic coating was gone by there DI (drill instructor). It was almost as bad as having to go in the gas chamber.

He silently laughed to himself as he remembered his friend Zach puking his guts in the gas chamber, Zach didn't really fair well in the chamber or boot camp for that matter he was more of a tech guy loved games and wanted figure out why things worked.

He began to shake off these thoughts as they were starting to distract him; he needed to be level head if he was going to find his team. After the slip space rupture that the capital ship made the entire city a wreck, marines and ODST's were scattered all over the place confused and when the comms died they were alone. There were small battles during the time of the slip space but now it very quite and it was unnerving.

As he walked away from his pod that he was examining for two minutes too long, he found the door to the hotel.

As he grabbed the handle to only find out it was locked.

"Damn, why is it always me having to break down doors," Jim groaned while placing his shoulder on the door and began to push into it.

On his third try he busted through and went head first onto the floor, " Really need to keep my balance next timeâ€|." He whispered, as he got up off the floor brushing off dust.

It was pitch black even though it was only 6:40pm and as he flicked his visors NV it started to outline objects in a bright yellow color while he walked, he could see cabinets dented over the floor next to rooms and a small common room with a couch and a T.V. "Not much of a home but its better than sleeping in the garbage," he thought with a smirk.

As he walked down towards the vast darkness, he noticed two bodies, their lifeless carcasses stuck with metal spikes protruding out of their chest. He was disappointed that they were marines that were caught off guard and slaughtered by the Covenant. As he knelt down by the body he said his own quick prayer for his fellow Devil Dogs, an after doing this he began checking there bodies for IFF tags to identified them.

As he finished finding there tags he notice one was a recruit only nineteen years old just like him, he cursed that a young soldier was killed, and stuffed the tags under his breastplate into his pocket while he walked down the stairs to the lobby floor wanting to get some Covenant blood.

He found the door towards the street and peered outside and towards

the sky, he groaned as he noticed it was starting to get cloudy, he hated it when it was cloudy because with clouds came rain and with the rain it became harder to see.

As he walked out onto the street past the destroyed UNSC hogs and Covenant ghosts, towards the Numbouy-apartments he saw more bodies.

"Must have been a hell of a battle here," Jim said as walked carefully over the tangled bodies of Humans and strangely just Unggoy (grunts), Kig-Yar (jackals), and Jiralhanae (brutes) but no Sangheili (elites) he was puzzled that the Brutes seem to be leading the squads of Covenant. "Usually the elites lead them, why are the brutes leading?" Jim thought to himself, just then his train of thought was broking by a shot that rang out in the distance he twitch as he drop down into cover behind a destroyed NMPD patrol car, he thought that there might be a soldier nearby judging by the sound of the shot, he hoped that the marine was alive because he sure as hell could use some help in New Mombasa.

As he walked to the relative location of the shot, it started to rain, "This doesn't help," Jim cursed to himself as he strained his eyes to see his way to the location. Once he made his hour-long journey to the spot, he saw a small street filled with garbage and vehicles thrown about leading down to the Numbouy-apartments.

As he scanned the area for any signs of the marine he notice a body, it wasn't human but Sangheili.

As he approached the body he knelt down next to the head of the alien, " Nice, right between the eyes, " Jim whispered silently admiring the shot, as he examined the entrance of the small hole, he than notice the casing next to the body, as he picked the shell up to his face he turned it slowly.

He soon saw the etching on the side * M61.2* he instantly knew an ODS1 trooper was nearby due to the standard issue magnum casing, but as he craned his head up he only saw a deserted street.

As he started to get up off the wet tarmac nearly slipping in the process, thinking that if he could find him or her for that matter he might have a better chance at finding his squad, but as he searched from his spot he couldn't see any silhouette of anyone, "Can I catch a break man!" he yelled quietly staring up to the heavens as the rain started to fall harder.

He decided it was unwise to search for anyone now that the sun was beginning it descent to the end of the skyline. He checked his visor tac map and looked at the upper right hand Corner seeing that it was 7:54pm.

He didn't even dare to walk towards Numbouy hotel as he saw phantoms floating off, "If that troopers out that way I hope to hell he makes it," he said quietly staring down the street.

As he walked back he decided to keep frosty knowing a trooper just got into a fight with an elite and he didn't want any unwanted attention today, as he retrace his steps three clicks back to the foreshore hotel past the small street battle he saw two drop pods, "Why are there more troopers coming down?" as he squinted watching

the pods descended, the rain was starting to clear up just enough to noticed there were longer and sleeker than human drop pods, "Looks like I will have to fight today." Jim said smiling.

2. Chapter 2

Chapter 2

Friendly Fire

The pod shuddered as she descended to earth, she was just a minor domo on her first special operation giving by the holy Prophet of Regret, and she was very excited that she was picked for this operation over all the males in the zealot lances. She thought that this would prove to the males that females are just as strong to go on high profile operations. She checked her gear making sure that she was set; she didn't want anything to go wrong today.

As she heard the hard impact of the ground and the sudden jolt forward she knew that the pod had made touchdown.

As the lid slid up, the rush of cool air from the rain as she leaped from the pod was soothing to her hide from the long dry descent.

As she reached the moist mud, Voro' Chonchiyo singled Rha' Grioto to follow, "Stay close female, or I will leave your hide," Voro' Chonchiyo growled, he hated that a female would have such an honor to be on this mission for the prophet and he was clearly showing his disgust. "You should heed your words Voro' Chonchiyo or it might be your hide left behind," Rha' Grioto retorted Voro' Chonchiyo just snorted with disgust from Rha' Grioto retort as they jogged up from the small park to the deserted street,

As they made there way to the first rally point she thought back to the last contact with the other lances it was odd that the communicator lit up with Sangheili screams during the descent, they both thought that it was a death by the hands of the humans which made Rha' Grioto even more eager to kill the humans, but it did seem odd that it was only Sangheili screams, as she thought she was brought back by an unwelcoming sight.

Two filthy Jiralhanae one Major and one minor were at the first checkpoint standing with there arms folded staring at them, as they approached, the Jiralhanae stop the pair, "Why have you stopped us we are on an operation for the holy Prophet of Regret", Voro' Chonchiyo flared up in anger threatening there lives, but the Jiralhanae just stood there smiling showing there ape like mouth. " Your mission is forfeit to the Jiralhanae, Sangheili," the Major spoke, "You are a weak species and your deaths is the divine prophets will!" As the Major last words left his lips he grabbed Voro' Chonchiyo forearm and twisted him towards his body, Voro' Chonchiyo was stunned by this an before he could get his bearings the second Jiralhanae hit the side of his mandibles breaking the shield and his teeth in the process; knocking him out.

This startled Rha' Grioto but quickly she aimed here carbine at the minor's head firing it. As the shot sped through the air with ba' shhh, as the Jiralhanae turned the green streak met his eye and exited out the back of his head spraying brain matter and bits of

skull and dull purple blood on the tarmac.

As the Jiralhanae hit the tarmac with a loud thud the Major howled in anger and through Voro' Chonchiyo to the side of a bus with a smack that sounded as if his back broke and instantly became still, Rha' Grioto knew that if she doesn't dispatch the Jiralhanae she would most likely perish just as her leader.

As she aimed her rifle the Jiralhanae grabbed the end of her rifle pushing it away from his head just as she fired causing the Jiralhanae to howl in pain as the shot created a gaping hole in his hand, but it didn't stop him from shifting his attack to his other hand.

As it made contact with her head knocking her down to the tarmac throwing her carbine away from her. As she quickly looked up the Jiralhanae had pulled out his spikier as he walked up, "Scream, Sangheili!" as he spoke he shot her leg making her thigh stick to the road, she screamed in pain as the brute raised his weapon to her head smiling.

POV switch

JIM

Jim rounded the corner of the Ming Le's restaurant. He went to go looking for the Covenant to see if they were here after he saw the pods touched down only two clicks from foreshore hotel.

Just as he made it to the back of the restaurant overlooking the street he saw the elites were with the brutes, "Well looks like I found the aliens little tea party," Jim whispered mockingly as he grabbed the rim of his M34 Tact scope over his visor to his eyes.

"Let's see whom I will be fighting wâ€¦." Just before he had time to finish his sentence the lead brute grabbed the lead elite and just as quick the minor punched him, "What the hell?" Jim was confused at the friendly fire, just as quick as he completed his sentence the elite in the back quickly sprayed the minor brains on the road, which caused the Major to through the elite he was holding to a bus nearby with extreme prejudice.

And just as the last elite was about to snap to the brute he grabbed its rifle and howled in pain, "Ok it looks like it needs help," Jim thought while drawing his M6S magnum from its holster and snapped to the brute's head just after he had fired his spike into the thigh of the downed elite.

Without thinking about the Sangheili being his enemy he fired 4 rounds to the side of the Jiralhanae's head, two rounds impacted his shield causing him to turn his head towards the fire just as the third hit dissipated his shield exposing its ugly head to the forth shot which went clean between the brutes eyes, as he rolled on his heels falling and planting his ape like face on elites boot causing the Sangheili more pain as its foot twisted away from the impact wound of the spike tearing it a-bit.

The Sangheili screams were starting to make Jim cringe as he descended to the street, he may hate the elites but screams no matter

what species made him feel sorry for them, "Curse my sensitivity," growled Jim, he wished he was like his squad leader George unwavering in the face of battle and in pain.

As he made it to the Sangheili he began pushing the brute off the boot of the elite which made it scream a lot more due to the brutes body pushing the boot out more and still wondering why he isn't killing it.

Maybe he felt sorry for it being in friendly fire like that, or he just an idiot thinking that it would be happy if he helped it.

As the big oaf of a brute rolled off splashing in a pool of water that was forming in a crater, he quickly walked to the head of the Sangheili just as its screams were becoming soft and then quiet, he noticed it started to close its eyes, "Crap," cursed Jim, he knew this was the sign of a bleed out, and if it wasn't fixed up in 30 minutes it would die, "Damn it, it will take an hour to make it back to foreshore," Jim was starting to worry.

Not knowing why he was doing this he laid down next to the leg of the elite right where the spike went through. He took off his Tactical backpack and rifled through the contents looking for his med kit, "Finally!" Jim whispered happily, as he pulled the med kit out, opening it and then taking the mini saw that was used for freeing people from metal restrictions.

He didn't waste time at sawing at the spike, after a minute of cutting he freed the elites thigh and started to push the spike out through. Once this was finished the blood really started to come, he scrambled for the med kit looking for the field dress kit, once he found the kit he started to stitch the exit wound on the bottom of the thigh, "God please let there be no patrols coming this way," Jim whispered, he had to disregard finding shelter due to the limited time he had to save the elites life. As he finished the bottom of the wound the needle slipped through his fingers, "Really not helping losing the needle like that Jim!" he yelled in his head trying to keep as calm as he can, as he reached back into the med kit to pull out his last fresh needle. As he started to stitch the entrance wound on the top of the thigh, the elite moaned in pain, "Please don't wake up its harder to this with someone awake," Jim said worryingly.

3. Chapter 3

Chapter 3

Curiosity

As he finished laying the elite on the floor he stretched his back, "Man you were heavier than I thought," he whispered quietly, as he began to kneel down to look at the wound to make sure it didn't rupture, as he touched the body of the Sangheili with his cold glove she shivered, "Look like you guys get cold," he whispered to himself as he got up and walked out into the hallway. As he strolled down the hall he found a room with the number 123, he was surprised when he opened the door that the room was big enough for two, "I might like sleeping in here," Jim thought smiling as he made his way to the bed, just as he walked he started to get hungry, "Well when I get back

mine as well have an MRE (Meals ready to eat)," he said as he rubbed his stomach.

He grabbed the blanket off the queen-sized bed and rolled it around his arm so he didn't drag it on the floor making any noise as he walked back to the lobby.

Once he made it back he placed the blanket over the Sangheili's body very carefully so he didn't wake her, she smiled slightly as he placed it.

He then sat on the couch behind the Sangheili, and grab his tactical backpack looked inside and found his MRE, "Ahhâ€¦lets see what the UNSC chefs made for me today," he said removing his helmet as he ran his hand through his short chestnut brown hair.

He opened the small package, and to his disgusted he found that he got four fingers of death, "Of all the things to get, I get the franks," he groaned quietly, "I think ill just eat the beans," Jim whispered as he opened the package for the fork. Just as he began his unpleasing meal the Sangheili stirred.

He watched as the elite sat up, and just as she did she spoke, "Voro' Chonchiyo?"

The Sangheili looked around for her companion, as her head craned to the direction of Jim's face, "Well hello sleeping beauty," Jim said as he ate his beans. "What have you done to Voro' Chonchiyo human!" she said angrily as she tried to stand, as soon as she straighten her left leg she collapsed with the pain that shot up through her entire leg and cursed, "Hey he's back by the dead brutes and try not to stand to much until your leg regains some strength," Jim said calmly, he didn't truly worry that she was threatening to attack him with her physical hindrance at the moment she was like a harmless little puppy.

"Anyway what's your name?" Jim asked smiling, "Why should I tell you human!" she said trying to get up again. "Hey I'm serious don't do that you might cause more pain to yourself," Jim said as he watched her try to stand.

"And I don't feel like getting anymore blood on my hands from stitching," as he lifted his gloves up.

She look at the gloves in a half crouch so that her leg would not hurt, "Why did you help me human?" she said a little calmer, "Well I am not sure you see, I basically helped you because your screams were hurting my head," Jim said with a smirk, "Shut up human!" she said angrily. He saw that she was reaching for her thigh which used to hold her sword, as she reached for the clamp she didn't feel the stock, "Where is my weapon!" she yelled, "In a safe place," Jim said calmly, now starting to stand.

"Please can you sit your straining your wound," Jim said as he put his hands up to his chest showing that he had peaceful intent.

Rha' Grioto was a little surprised that the human was being peaceful; as she sat she didn't drop her guard being wary of the human. "Are you hungry?" Jim asked smiling; she nodded but kept a stern look on him. "Here," Jim said handing her a small chocolate, "It will help

you feel better." Jim said as he sat next to her and put out his hand as she fiddled with the wrapping. "I mine as well introduce myself, I am PFC. Jim Larson," smiling as he spoke, she was very skeptical about the humans pleasantries but took his hand and shook it, "I am minor domo Rha' Grioto," she said calmly, she was starting to become more comfortable near him, "Here," Jim said as he held his hand out, "let me open that for you," he took the chocolate and opened the top of the wrapper and handed it back to Rha' Grioto whom nodded in appreciation. "Thank you," she said smiling.

As he sat there looking at Rha' Grioto he started to stare into her eyes, her eyes were a deep amber which was his favorite color and his trim on his armor and her mandibles were shorter than males he found that odd because he hasn't see a female Sangheili before.

As he sat there drifting away he was abruptly brought back to his senses when she spoke "Uhâ€¦ Jim what are you staring at?" "Oh uhâ€¦" Jim was a bit embarrassed that he had drifted so quickly. "Well I uhâ€¦" Jim started scratching his head "Um I was thinking that uhâ€¦ I need a drink of water," he said as he suddenly got up grabbing his gloves, "I'll go see if the water is working back in one of the rooms."

He walked back to the room he was in early and found the bathroom, he walked to the sink he turned the handle; it took what seemed like a lifetime before the water squeaked through the narrow spout. "Awesome the water seems to work," Jim sighed happily, as he placed his gloves and hands under the water rinsing Rha' Grioto blood off them. As he finished this he took a sip of the water and splashed himself with some trying to clear his head from his confusing thoughts he had, and turned the sink off.

Once he made it back to the lobby he noticed Rha' Grioto looking at a picture, as she saw him walk in Rha' Grioto looked at him, "Is this your mate?" asked Rha' Grioto pointing at the female in the picture, "Uhâ€¦ no its not," Jim said frowning, "Did she turn you down?" Rha' Grioto said cocking her head looking puzzled.

Jim rubbed his neck, "No its my brothers girlfriend," sighed Jim still frowning.

"Where is you brother now?" Rha' Grioto asked, "Dead," Jim said now grabbing the picture and stuffing his last piece of his brother under his breastplate, "I'm sorry," Rha' Grioto said looking to the floor now frowning.

"Yeah, its ok," Jim said as he sat next to Rha' Grioto, "The waters working if you want a drink," Jim said pointing his thumb behind him.

"Thanks but I would rather have a shower instead," said Rha' Grioto as she tried to stand again, Jim came up under her arm to help her from going forward. "Thanks Jim," she said blushing, "Do you need help getting to the room?" Jim asked worried. "Yes I would like some help," she said slightly smiling.

As they walked to the room he showed her to the bathroom, it was large enough to fit them bought plus another marine. "Alright ill uhâ€¦ go back to the lobby while you take your shower," Jim said nervously, as he turned on his heels back to the rooms door as he

reached for the handle Rha' Grioto asked for assistance, "Jim can you umâ€| take my boot off?"

"Ah yeah sure," he said, he was becoming very uncomfortable as he began walking back, as he past the threshold of the bathroom his head started to burn. She had just finished taking of her crotch plate and the only other piece left besides her thigh piece was her boot and her skintight exo-suit.

As he moved closer to help remove the boot on the wounded leg he couldn't help but check out Rha' Grioto slender body, Rha' Grioto was lean due to service and very veryâ€|he shook his head trying to clear his head, as he grabbed her boot he asked, " Umâ€| Rha' Grioto can you lift your leg a bit so I can remove the boot," Jim was starting to feel like he was burning up as she lifted her leg, he looked away trying to be as gentlemanly as possible but found curiosity was tugging him to look back, as he did this he quickly pulled the boot off and said, "W-Well I uhâ€|" Jim was starting to stutter, "Well bye," just as he said that he quickly walked back too the lobby.

4. Chapter 4

Chapter 4

****New friends****

Once Jim had shut the door to the room, she had begun to remove her exo-suit. As Rha' Grioto finished, she stepped onto the cold tiles of the shower, "Jim was acting strange as he removed my boot," Rha' Grioto thought to herself while she began turning the nobs for the right temperature. She began to wash her body cleansing the blood from her thigh, "Maybe he was still upset about the picture," Rha' Grioto whispered, grabbing the bar of soap.

She sniffed it wondering what it is used for, finding that its scent was a pleasant floral Rha' Grioto decided that it was used for cleansing just like the soap on Sanghelios. She enjoyed the quiet time she had in the shower too much, as she noticed that she had been the shower for forty-two minutes she quickly turned the nobs until the water dripped and then stopped.

Once she finished, she got out to look for a towel to dry her hide, she searched the bathroom for a towel but to no avail, Rha' Grioto then walked into the bedroom and searched the dressers for any thing that could dry her body.

She looked throughout room but found nothing but drawers and a bed without a blanket. She decided maybe if she asked Jim he might be able to find one.

As she reached the handle of the door it moved and the door swing opened, Jim walked right into Rha' Grioto body which made him stumble backwards.

As Jim looked up to see what had knocked him over he noticed Rha' Grioto wet nude body, Rha' Grioto went bright purple and quickly cover her body just as Jim's face turned redder than a rip tomato, "Uhâ€|." Jim wasn't thinking straight, "Here," Jim said looking away

handing Rha' Grioto a towel, "I noticed that there were no towels in here so I grab one," he said quickly, still looking away.

"Thank you Jim," Rha' Grioto said slowly closing the door, "Sorry for eh... walking into you," Jim said, still red. "Its ok Jim," Rha' Grioto said through the door. As she started drying her hair she heard Jim curse to himself and walked off.

Jim was sitting back in the lobby on the blanket he had given Rha' Grioto he rubbed his neck still trying to think about anything else than Rha' Grioto moist naked. "Damn it," Jim said aloud, slapping his face, "Are you well?" Rha' Grioto asked walking in with a limp, still a slight shade of purple over the whole event. "Um yeah just thinking," Jim said, now looking over to her, "I am truly sorry for doing that."

"It is alright Jim," she said. As she began to sit across from him, Jim's helmet made a small noise. Jim quickly grabbed it off the couch and popped it onto his head.

"This is ODST ID 2234 Zach Marino, requesting assistance from any UNSC personal How-Copy?"

Jim was excited to hear one of his teammates was alive, "Zach this is Jim Larson going Oscar Mike to your location How-Copy?"

"Copy Bones, I am near Ming Le's restaurant. Small firefight, I have one marine with me not sure if we can last any longer man," Zach said, his voice was wavering.

"Copy ill be there in a few bro," Jim said over his comm while grabbing his AR5CQ. "You should stay here, I not sure there keen on seeing an elite walking up behind them," Jim said depolarizing his visor, "I will not sit here if there is Jiralhanae too be killed!" Rha' Grioto said furiously, now standing.

"Well I am also not keen on you being on my heels just yet Rha' Grioto your still considered hostile at the moment," Jim said starting to furrow his brow. "And before I can have you with me in any sort of combat I'd like to have someone on my back."

"I'm sorry but I just can't take that chance yet." Jim said now starting to ease back a bit. "Please can you just stay here." "I will go with and that is final." Rha' Grioto said walking up to Jim and pressing her finger on his chest.

Jim sighed, "Fine then, your taking point."

As they started to get close to the location Zach had pinned, the bright blue flash and roaring sound of plasma fire and bullets on concrete was ringing in their ears. "Rha' Grioto stay close and don't draw attention," Jim said while getting into a low crouch. They quickly scurried behind crushed cars on the street and peeked over the vehicles looking for Zach and the marine, "Zach, where are you mate?" Jim said over his comms. "I'm in the kitchen, in the back. Bones the marine was hit he's going into shock, you better march your ass in here." Zach said, while whispering to the marine and his screams came over the comms and snapped, when the commination was finished. "Rha' Grioto. Here take my M6S," as he looked back noticing she didn't have any weapon, She grabbed the magnum which fitted

perfectly in her small hand, "You stay with me and cover, were are going to pull them out."

As they ran across the street Jim heard the howl of the brutes and squeals of grunts as they were spotted, the brutes began to register what had just happen and quickly yelled at the grunts to switch targets. But before the enemy was able to fire they were in the safe confines of the restaurant.

"Oi, mate in 'ere," Zach beckoned as he saw Jim run in. Just as Jim made it he saw Rha' Grioto and quickly snapped his M7S to her, "Bones look out!"

"Whoa dude, hold you fire!" Jim said, now standing in front of Rha' Grioto whom crouched behind him. "What the fuck Bones! MOVE!" Zach yelled, now starting to get angry. "She's friendly at the moment. Please we need to scoot the Covenant going to rain down on us like a bunch of angry farmers." Jim said calmly.

Zach eased off a-bit depolarizing his visor. "What the hell man," Zach said, now helping the now unconscious marine over his back.

Just as Zach got back on his feet, Jim saw two grunts walked in. They began to aim their plasma pistols right to Rha' Grioto whom had her back turned.

Jim wasn't thinking as he pushed Rha' Grioto out of the line fire, he stood there and fired his AR5CQ at the first contact shredding its face into bright blue ribbons splattering blood on his friend, and before he could snap to the last contact a bolt of green light whizzed by and made contact with his right shoulder.

Rha' Grioto watched as Jim hit the floor hard, she became enraged and ran up to the grunt and grabbed its face and began to squeeze. "Mwah, my face, MY FACE!" The grunt squealed in panic as her claws dug deep into its eye. He squirmed for only a minute before bright blue blood flowed from its sockets and dripped down her fingers. She threw the grunt onto the floor and ran to Jim. "Damn, Rha' Grioto, that was harsh," he said slightly, cringing with the white-hot searing pain in his right shoulder. "I'm glad you are well Jim," Rha' Grioto said, smiling. "Oi, Split-jaw, you done? Pick his ass up and lets scoot," Zach said, tapping her shoulder.

She picked Jim up in a cradle, and grabbed his rifle, and laid it on his chest. "Uhâ€¦ Rha' Grioto, my shoulders hit not my leg," Jim said, patting her chest to let go. As she placed him down Zach was started to get impatient, "Ok mate, will you stop fucking around. We need to vamoose!" he said, as he shifted the marines weight on his shoulder. "Right, lets move." Jim said, trying to hold his rifle with his injured arm.

As they jetted out of the restaurant they saw that a phantom had just touched down and started to lift troops out. "Jim, what the hellâ€¦ are they doing," Zach said huffing and looking back. "I don't know, but its best not to stay and find out," Jim said; cover his rear in a low stance with Rha' Grioto. After their hour-long march they made it back to the hotel, "Lay the marine on the couch. Ill look at his injuries," Jim said, grabbing his tactical backpack, and pulling out the med kit. Zach laid the marine down and once the marine's back hit

the couch he woke up with a scream. "WHAT THE BLOODY HELL!" he yelled, gasping for air. "Easy marine you were hit," Jim said, placing his hand on his chest; forcing him back down. He began to apply burn gel on his arm, which in turn made the marine groaned in pain for a few seconds.

"There, now what is your name marine?" Jim said, testing his memory to see if there was anything else wrong with him. " Corporal Michael Jones. 21st armor division," he said, in a small rasp. "Good," Jim said, happy to see he was doing fine. He began to set up, putting his hands on his face, "Ahh, this is ballocks! My team is wasted," he looked up, "Where's the rest of your team trooper?"

"Scattered, dead I don't know," Zach said, walking up from the wall he was leaning on. "The only part of my team in here is Jim," Zach grunted, placing his hand on Jims shoulder. "And his little tag along he found." Rha' Grioto step into view; the marine's face pulled an expression of fear, "Kill the damn thing!" Michael said, grabbing Jim's injured shoulder, which made him cringe. "Hey, its alright she's friendly," Jim said, depolarizing his visor showing his pained expression, while pushing the marines hand off. "What. That **thing** is a female," Michael said, still in fear for his life, "What the hell you git, do you have a hadron. Kill it! It's the enemy!"

"Hey, settle down," Jim said, grabbing the marines shoulder's, "She helped us save your sorry ass, so show some respect." The marine started to ease, but his body was tense and ready to fight. "Fine, let me go," he said jerking away from Jims grip. He got up and walked to Rha' Grioto, "Thanks, split-jaw," Michael said, stretching out his hand but kept his piercing look. She took his hand graciously and shook it, bowing her head.

"Alright, now that, that's done, Zach?" Jim said, cocking his eyebrow up smirking, "What?" Zach said, puzzled, "Oh, yeah thanks," He said, shooting Rha' Grioto a thumbs up.

Jim pulled of his helmet and looked at Zach whom was doing the same. "Hey, Zach what's wrong with your face?" Jim feigned a look of concern, "What, what's wrong?" Zach said, slightly concerned now. "Has your face always looked that ugly," Jim said, laughing while he sat. "Oh, bug off mate," he said, punching Jims left arm, and than sat next too him. "Hey, Rha' Grioto why don't you sit here," Jim said, pointing next to him. As she began to sit next to Jim, the marine in the back grunted and walked out into the hallway. "Hey, you two should talk, get a little more comfortable with each other it's the best thing to do now," Jim said, as he got up and strode off after the marine.

POV switch

RHA' GIOTO

She looked at Jim as he walked out into the dark hallway; she began to think back to the event that had happened earlier, "Why did he help me?" she thought, but before she could think of any reason, the human known as Zach spoke. "Thinking hard?" Zach said, looking stern at her. "Yes, Zach I am confused why Jim had help tend to my wound," Rha' Grioto said, showing him her the patched wound that Jim had done, "Well," Zach said, rolling his head round to the hallway and

then back, "He cares for people no matter what, that's why he's a good combat medic but he has his weakness."

"When we were young he would help any stray animal, even if it was pissed off," Zach said, now looking less tense, "He just couldn't let anything die if he knew he could help it." "That's probably why he helped you." Zach said, looking back as he heard someone yell. Rha' Grioto began to stand but, Zach put his hand up and spoke, "Don't, they are arguing its best to stay out off it right now," she looked back to hall and than to Zach's face.

"Are you sure they won't duel?" Rha' Grioto asked, slightly concerned, "Duel? Yeah right, if that happened Jim would kick his ass and that's hell of a way to make new friends," Zach said, smirking.

5. Chapter 5

****Sorry for the delays :/****

Chapter 5

****Hard memories ****

Jim was becoming enraged by the marine's statement. "You have no right to say that marine!" Jim yelled, slamming his fist on the wall next to the marine's head. The marine's face was malice, he knew he struck a nerve and wanted to push it. "Your family would fucking roll in there graves if they found out your helping that fucking bitch!" He said, now getting into Jim's face, "I hope you know, that you're helping the enemy. That is treason and Lord Hood might want your head mate."

The marine pulled away with the same expression. "You don't know shit marine, She was attacked by her own comrades." Jim said, keeping his fist on the wall but calming down. "And the elites could join are side, I mean they are fighting among themselves." The marine lost his malice look, turning it to anger. "Why would we help those fuckers, haven't you heard! The fucking bastards glassed Harvest, Reach, and many more human colonies!" He said, looking tense and very enraged.

"I had family on Reach, should I forget that they executed my family and other civilians?" Said the marine, taping Jim's chest with his finger. "Oh, well just because they are fighting among each other we have to help and forget all their faults." He said, with extreme sarcasm.

He looked straight into Jim's eyes, "I hope you know that you're a fucking retard for helping her. Because once she slits your throat while you sleep, I will laugh at your incompetence as I kill her." After the marine said that he strode off into a bedroom, slamming the door behind him with a loud thud. Jim rubbed his tired face, "Damn, the marine is right on some parts," Jim said, under his breathe, as he tried to calm himself down. He knew about the Sangheili's ways of fighting, they weren't keen on prisoners. He knows that Rha may also still want them dead, but he couldn't harm an injured person no matter even if they weren't human. Jim was becoming exhausted, the adrenalin was wearing off and his shoulder started to burn. Jim

gripped his shoulder which in-turn protested by burning like fire. Jim whimpered and let go of his shoulder; the armor piece was chewed away from the plasma and showed his melted flesh.

Jim reached into his pocket for the gel he used on the marine, but his pocket was void of the gel. "Must have left it back in the lobby." Jim said under his breath, pulling his hand out, "I hope Zach is getting along with her."

Jim heard laughter as he was getting close to the lobby. As he showed his face Rha' Grioto instantly look relieved, "Wellâ€¦" Jim said smiling, "Looks like you guys are having fun." "Aye, just telling her about your nature mate." Zach said, slightly smiling. Jim went red, thinking Zach might have said some embarrassing things, he was right as Rha' Grioto asked a shameful question. "Jim" she said also slightly smiling now, "How come you don't speak clearly to women?" Jim didn't like to answer that question. "Uhâ€¦" Jim was beginning to sweat a-bit; Rha' Grioto and Zach muffled their laughter under their hands, "Iâ€¦Uh... I have to get some burn gel quick, sorry, answer later. Ok?" Jim said quickly going over to the couch the marine was on earlier. Jim pulled his shoulder pad off and grabbed the gel off the couch; he applied the gel right on the burn, which in turn burned intensely for a second. "That feels better." Jim said, looking back to the group sitting on the blanket. He looked at his shoulder and sighed, it was never going to look normal again the flesh was so badly burned it looked as if a shark attacked him. "Wellâ€¦" Zach trailed off, Jim looked up at Zach puzzled, "How about that answer?" Jim forgot about that so quickly which made him become even redder. "Really? You guys don't want to know that." Jim said, hoping they would get off the subject.

Rha' Grioto chimed in, "I am particularly curious Jim, please tell us." She said, slightly blushing. "Shit," Jim said under his breath, he too was becoming redder after Rha' Grioto began to purple.

"Guys, please." Jim begged them, he didn't feel comfortable on this subject, "No mate, say it." Zach said, looking like he did when they were kids. Sporting the same facial expression he had when the teacher found out they punched the school bully at recess. Jim sighed, "Fine, I-I just getâ€¦ warm and sweaty with beautiful girls. I sometimes also say things that don't make sense. Is that enough?" "That's enough for me mate." Zach said throwing up his thumb up smiling. Rha' Grioto looked away for some reason looking very purple. Zach noticed and laughed slightly. "Oiy, I think you made her blush." Zach said thumbing towards Rha' Grioto. Jim looked straight at Zach, "Uhâ€¦ Yeah," Jim said, taking his stare to Rha' Grioto whom looked back at him. This seemed to calm her a-bit but she still was bright purple, Jim smiled at her. Zach got up and walked over to Jim, "Oiy! Jim?" Zach said snapping his fingers in his face, "Heard from Joker or Casey?" Jim looked at Zach blankly, "No." Jim said melancholy.

Zach pulled back rubbing his face, even though he was twenty he looked well in his thirties; his green eyes dark and rigid and his jarhead cut hair had bits of grey in it. "I hope to hell Jokers just fucking around." Zach said closing his eyes. "Man, he will be fine he is an ODST trooper." Jim said patting Zach's back, "Either he's killing or drinking." "Aye, but that drinking might get him killed." Zach said back blankly. Jim said nothing, he instead looked back at Rha' Grioto whom still held his magnum. "Hey, Rha' Grioto can you

toss my magnum?" Jim said, holding his hand out. Rha' Grioto looked at him and tossed the weapon; Jim caught it, twirled it, and holstered the magnum. "Nice one cowboy," Zach said, clapping his hands. Rha' Grioto stared at them and tilted her head sideways, "What is a cowboy?" She said, puzzled. Zach laughed noticeably and looked away, "Jim, she acts like a puppy." He said turning red from laughter. "Yeah, I noticed that." Jim said, smiling. Rha' Grioto looked even more confused, tilting her head the other way, Zach couldn't contain himself and busted out in laughter.

"Sorry Rha' Grioto, he thinks your head tilting is funny." Jim said, slightly laughing himself. "Oh." Rha' Grioto said, looking sad, "Oh, I'm sorry Rha' Grioto I didn't mean it as an insult, its justâ€¦ cute." Jim said, getting close to her while Zach still laughed. "Itsâ€¦ cute and don't be sad please." Jim begged, holding her shoulder. Rha' Grioto looked at him turning very purple, "Thank you Jim." She said, looking down. "Here, I will tell you what a cowboy is." Jim said, taking his hand away, and sitting down next to her. "A cowboy isâ€¦ uh, someone back in are past whoâ€¦ uh, herded cows to a grazing area and was particularly handed with a weapon." Jim said, scratching his head, he didn't know much about the 1800's and it surly showed. But Rha' Grioto took this description and did not prod him to tell more.

Zach began to laugh so hard that he started to break into a rasp, "Is he alright?" Rha' Grioto said, looking at Zach as if he was about to kill over. "Oh he's fine, just laughing hard." Jim said, looking at Zach. This was the hardest Jim has seen him laughed since the beginning of the war. "Well, I'm tired." Jim said, getting up. "Could you move Rha' Grioto your on the blanket." Rha' Grioto got up and Jim rolled up the blanket. "Zach!" Jim said, loud enough so he could hear, "Ayeâ€¦" Zach said back, slowly calming down. "I'm going to bed." Jim said, "You should sleep to mate, you look like you need it." "Ayeâ€¦ I'm going to set up some trips and hope the covies don't slit us." Zach said getting up and walking out of sight smiling.

Jim opened the door where he found the blanket; the moon was now high in the sky and was shining into the room, covering the objects with a milky glow. He strode past the lone chair to the bed and laid the blanket on it in a heap.

He rubbed his face; he was becoming increasingly tired, "What a day." Jim said, pulling off his only shoulder pad left. He striped down to his boxers taking his armor and drags to the dresser, placing it upon the top. He took out the magnum from it holster and set it on the desk next to the bed. Jim stretched his back out and yawned, "Damn." Jim said cracking his back, "I defiantly need some rest."

****R.E.M****

****Rapid eye movement ****

****0100' hours "1:00 a.m."****

****Heart rate increasing ****

Jim was dressed in his dress blues his mother dressed in black and his father dressed his white navel uniform. They were walking slowly to the convoy that was lead by a black hearse, Jim's eyes were

burning but nothing was coming out as his father still looked as he does in the military, emotionless, still, it was unnerving. As they drove from the UNSC center in Madison towards the new graveyard that was built when this conflict arose, the demand of graves was increasing, it was becoming the most destructive war humanity has ever encountered and it was taking a toll on humanity. They turned up the knoll towards Kyle's new resting place, Jims mother started to cry furiously and Jims father tried to clam her down by holding her close and whispered inaudible words. Jim was sitting next to the window looking straight at the back of the hearse, he was broken his eldest brother was killed by the Covenant he didn't show it but his heart was torn and he just wanted to kill all of the Covenant. The hearse stopped by an open grave guarded by four marines holding AR5's and a captain holding the famous steel sword flanked by a catholic preacher. In unison the three other vehicles opened and all of Jims family stepped out. Jim his father and his twin cousins George and Harold walked in there military uniforms towards the back of the hearse. Jim opened the back showing the grey casket covered with the ODSF flag, He and his father sled it down towards the twins. With little effort they lifted the casket upon their shoulders and moved slowly towards the grave, the family members were sitting in the few chairs set out in the grass. They set the casket gingerly on the rig, they step back and saluted the empty casket with crisp and stern faces.

The twins went back to their parents as Jim and his father sat next to his mother whom was in the front row. The preacher began his sermon and Jim's mother began to cry more than she had in the car. His father had a tear drop from his cheek; Jim was becoming increasingly upset as he saw his father tear up. As the preacher finished his hour-long speech, the captain told everyone to stand.

The captain ushered the marines into position and walked to the casket, he looked at it and stood crisp into a salute. Then taking the flag off reviling the name "Cpl. Kyle Larson Wolverines company 2504-2525" he called a marine over to help fold the flag into a tight triangle. After the ceremonial flag cross he walked over to Jim's mother and handed her the flag, she nodded and cried harder. He than walked to Jim's father saluted him and shook his hand. The captain now came to Jim and stood in front of him he began his routine first saluting than shaking his hand but he held on and looked straight into Jim's eyes. On his left eye was a deep scar which made his eye blind and milky white this was starting to make Jim uneasy, he began to muttered under his breath at Jim, "Son, I'm sorry for your brothers deathâ€¦" He said letting go of his hand, "Here, this was meant for you." The captain handed Jim a picture of Kyle and his girlfriend Sara, Jim started to tear up but held them back in front of the CO.

He walked away from Jim and back to the marines standing at attention. The captain yelled and the ODSF Light of Adian burial song was beginning, this was sung at all ODSF burials in honor to their strength. "About face Hoah!" Yelled the captain, as machines the marines looked towards the casket. The captain looked at the casket and saluted, the marines aimed towards the sky to their left. "Fire!" Yelled the captain, and the marines fired there first shot, the second shoot came like a crack. One after another cracking madly as the empty casket lowered slowly to the depths of the earth. The soft beats of the drums trailing off as the marines stopped

firingâ€|

****Exiting R.E.M**
>

****0300' "3:00 a.m.****

Jim woke up in a cold sweet gasping for air, "Fuck!" Jim yelled, looking around the room, he clasped his hands on his face. "Damn, that's some hard memories," Jim said wiping his forehead. He pushed the blankets off him and walked to the window, he placed his hand on the glass and looked out to the street, which was still littered with bodies. Jim sighed, "Damn it Kyle, why did you sign up for security detail on ONI base on Reach." Jims bedroom door handle jingled and then swung open, Rha' Grioto walked in with a small limp with her hands up ready to fight. "Jim!" she said loudly, Jim looked at her, she was only wearing her exo-suit, Jim turned red, "Well, now that memory is gone," Jim, said aloud. Rha' Grioto looked at Jim and turned bright purple and covered her eyes. Jim looked down he forgot he was still in his boxers and worse yet his member was slightly sticking out. Jim scrambled to hide it and as he tried he stumbled backwards and fell on the floor with a thud. "Oh godâ€|" Jim said, starting to become very hot, Rha' Grioto came to help him back up, Jim looked up, she averted her eyes again; he looked back down and noticed his boxers were down far enough for her to see him. He grabbed the rim of his boxers and pulled the up fast, cursing quietly, Rha' Grioto held her hand out still averting her eyes. Jim grabbed her hand and she hoisted him up. "Well." Jim said, "Bad timing eh?" "Indeed Jim." Rha' Grioto said, still very purple showing small freckles on her face.

Zach rushed in with his pants on and his M7S drawn. He looked at the pair near the bed, "Oh," Zach said smiling, "Did I catch you fucking around eh?" "N-No Zach I-I just fell." Jim stammered, Jim looked at Rha' Grioto whom was still purple, Jim looked down they were still holding each other's hands. In unison they let go of each other's hands "Well I'm saved Rha' Grioto, can you guys leave? I'd like to take a shower." Jim said rubbing his neck moving his dog tags around.

After Jim had dried off and put his gear on he walked down to the lobby where everyone was sitting. "Well oh great leader, what's are next move?" the marine said, with the anger in his voice that was there yesterday. Zach punched the marines arm and Rha' Grioto laughed quietly "Oiy! Fuck you split jaw!" Yelled the marine, Jim became furious Zach was about to punch him again but Jim beat him to it and punched him square in the jaw, "How about that split jaw!" Jim yelled back at the marine. He rubbed his face there was a small gash on his jaw that bleed, "Fuck you mate." He retorted back, "Well" Zach said trying to get people's attention, "I heard Joker over the comms, he's in the zoo. In the zebra pen."

6. Chapter 6

****Chapter 6****

****What a Joker****

Jim grabbed his tactical backpack off the couch just as Zach popped

on his helmet. Jim looked over at the marine, whom still rubbed his now visibly bruised and bleeding jaw. "Jim," Rha' Grioto said walking up to him, "May I come with, I don't feel safe with this other human." Jim looked around her at the marine who looked like he would kill someone. "Yeah, you can come. But it may be awhile till we get back, about six hours there and back." Jim said looking out the window, "And we will be marching back through the street you were attacked at. And I'm not sure if they increased foot traffic there." Rha' Grioto looked at Jim stern, "I wish to come and kill Jiralhanae Jim," she said forcefully. "I care not of the time that will be consumed." Jim looked at her and smiled, "Well, lets get a move on then."

They walked in a crescent as they moved to the pedestrian stairs behind Ming Le's restaurant, Rha' Grioto looked over to were Voro' Chonchiyo used to be. Jim also looked noticing that the elite was gone; only a small pool of dried blood was left. "Rha' Grioto," Jim said taking his gaze to her, "Who was that guy?" "Voro' Chonchiyo," She said looking back, "My leader." She faced forward; focused as they walked silently past the spot were Jim had saved her life. Rha' Grioto looked over towards the other end of the street, Jim noticed she was squinting and then a thin smile appeared on her face. She rushed over to a metallic object that rested next to a NMPD patrol car. Jim and Zach quickly jogged up behind her looking to see what she had found. Rha' Grioto turned around popping the purple carbine's energy cap back into position, Rha' Grioto looked at Jim as if she had been giving a new toy, "Guess you won't need my magnum anymore," Jim said patting her arm. "Indeed Jim," Rha' Grioto said, now craning her head towards the over pass next to them. Jim and Zach looked at what she was seeing, "Jim," Zach said. Jim watched as three wraiths, and a small squad of Covenant slowly moved over the bridge. Jim looked back to Zach and then to Rha' Grioto, "Follow me, we need to move."

Jim stuck his hand out to his back, both Rha' Grioto and Zach stopped and sunk back into the alley, it had been four hours since they set out after Joker and they were close now. Jim looked over to the entrance to the zoo; there were two jackals both armed with Covenant snipers, "Damn," Jim said depolarizing his helmet, "I don't think we can get them, they're looking around our area." He looked back and noticed Rha' Grioto was missing, "Zach," Jim said worriedly, "Were is she?" Zach looked at him, "She said she will take care of it." Jim looked back to where the jackals were, sticking his head out far enough to see, one of the jackals noticed and looked right at the alley Jim was in. The alien lifted his rifle level with Jim's head, but before the alien could fire, a green plasma shot streaked by and made contact with one of its huge eyes, spraying bright purple blood onto his comrade. As the first jackal fell twitching the second jackal turned towards the area the shot came from looking visibly shaken, but before it could scream another shot rang out and ended it life. Jim looked as the twitching bodies laid on the concrete where they once stood, "Damn," Zach said looking over Jim's shoulder, "Hell, she could replace Joker as the designated marksman," Jim said looking back at Zach. A few minutes later Rha' Grioto came out of the building behind them looking pleased, "Lets move, the opposition is disposed," she said visibly smiling. Jim followed after her raising his rifle to the left; Zach was still crouched behind Jim covering the rear. Rha' Grioto walked up to the two bodies of the jackals, their bodies now motionless. She kicked one of them in the head denting the skull with her heavy boot. Jim came up to her, "Rha'

Grioto," Jim said moving a-bit to the left to her so he didn't stand in the jackal's blood, "Are you alright you seem to be upset?" Jim said. Confused of what he just said, Rha' Grioto looked at him, " I feel like I am betraying my leaders," She said, looking upset, "I feel as if I am a heretic." Jim looked at her, "Rha' Grioto, you were betrayed by them. They were only using you." Jim said, ushering her out of the open, Zach began to straighten, still looking behind them, but looking more jumpy. "Jim," She said looking at him, "We need to move," Jim looked at her confused and then to Zach, Zach looked back at Jim, "We need to move, those wraiths we saw are moving over here."

Jim ran up to the doors and began to push on the huge doors to the zoo, "Really!" Jim said out of frustration. Hearing the hum of the wraiths draw near, he began to push harder on the door but the it only moved a bit. He kept pushing until he heard a loud clank and he went face first into the dusty ground. "Really!" Jim said again still facing the ground. Rha' Grioto walked over to his head and kneeled down, "Sorry Jim, you looked like you needed help," she said, laughing a bit. Zach closed the door quickly and looked at Jim, "looks like this lady is stronger than you mate," he said. Zach walked up to Jim's head and poked it with his weapon, "Get up, we need to get Joker," Zach said looking straight. Jim pushed himself up and brushed off the dust that had accumulated on his pants. He picked up his rifle and clicked it back, Zach looked at Jim, "Joker is in the zebra pen," he said, standing still, Jim knew he was looking at the tactical map. "He is only a click away." Zach said, looking to the left of Jim.

Zach headed the group, walking fast but still aware of the area, while both Jim and Rha' Grioto were behind him silently talking, "So, Rha' Grioto what's your planet like?" Jim said looking at her still slightly facing forwards. "It's like this planet, but we don't use fossil fuels like you do." She said looking at him. Jim looked back, "How many moons?" "Two," she said, looking at him smiling, "I would love to see your planet Rha' Grioto, once there is no threat of me being killed," Jim said with a dry laugh. Rha' Grioto looked at him, "If we do have a truce with your race I would like to show you my planet as well Jim," she said smiling. Zach put his hand up and waved them down. He looked back at them putting up one finger, Jim walked up to him, "Which contacted?" Jim said, "Brute, he is a minor," Zach said looking back through the bush. Jim looked over to the brute that was punching an elite to death, facing away from them. Jim looked at Zach nodding at him and sliding his knife from his chest plate's holster. Jim walked out of the bush crouched slowly walking up to the brute who still was finishing the brutal attack on the elite oblivious that Jim was about to slit him. Jim stood up to the brute, he was shorter than him; he was 5'11 and the brute was a good 8'2. The brute tilted his head back, Jim jumped up grabbing the brute's neck pulling it down. His eyes opened wide but before he could scream or fight back Jim placed the serrated part of the knife and sawed. The knife cut deep and the brute turned around causing the knife to cut his vein in his neck, Jim backed up running his knife on his sleeve cleaning the blade as he watched the brute gargled on its own blood. The brute cried slightly and fell to its knee's. It looked up at Jim looking as if it wanted mercy from the pain but Jim just watched as the brute pulled its own weapon onto itself and fired spraying a-bit of blood onto Jims boot. The body laid there in it's own pool of blood. Rha' Grioto and Zach walked out, "Damn Jim that was dark," he said looking at the body, "Yeah, but the damn thing is

a murderer. I don't show mercy to that kind of thing." Jim said looking at Rha' Grioto. She looked at the Sangheili looking extremely enraged, Jim looked over to it. Jim walked up to it and knelt down, he placed his hand on its chest looking at its eye's it was a female Jim became enraged as well. Then Jim noticed it twitched its mandible, Jim looked at Rha' Grioto, "Get over here quick!"

Rha' Grioto picked up the Sangheili, Jim took off his medical pack and handed it to Zach, "Bring her back to the hotel and do what you can, I'm going to get Joker," Jim said quickly, "Alright mate, see you when you get back." Zach and Rha' Grioto ran back from where they came, Jim looked back to a sign, "Good its only to the left," Jim said, running to the left where the road cut through a small patch of foliage. Jim vaulted over the wired fence into the zebra pen running up to the drop pod, the zebra near the pod ran off as Jim started to pry open the pod. Jim pulled the pod door off and looked inside, "Joker! What the hell!" Jim said looking at him, "What?" Joker said, Shaking his flask to his mouth, "It got hot, I needed to get cool." Joker said stepping out of the pod stretching and scratching his back. He looked at Jim now scratching his chest, "For Gods sake man put on your shirt and armor!" "Alright, Alright you don't have to nag," Joker said getting his upper armor on, After he finished putting on his custom shoulder piece of a shattered Sangheili skull he went back and grabbed his Type-50 sniper. He held his sniper in his right and held his helmet in his left. "So Jimmy boy where's Zach?" "I told him to go back to the hotel with Rha' Grioto," Jim said, signaling Joker to put his helmet on, "Sounds like a girl. I'm guessing Russian eh?" Joker said putting his tactical scoped helmet, "No she is a Sangheili." Jim said motioning him to move, "Oh, so you have shagged her?" Joker said in his usual tone as they vaulted over the wired fence, "No." Jim said jogging passed the brute he slit. Joker didn't let it go, "Did you see her puss?" Joker said, "No, Joker," Jim said placing his hand on his helmet. "Well," Joker said, "I bet I can," Joker said laughing. "Joker lay off," Jim said pulling the door open.

They walked down the street past the alley Jim and the others came from. Jim looked up as it began to rain again; Joker was behind Jim being unorthodox as usual kicking cans. "Jim!" Joker yelled, Jim quickly went prone and held his rifle out, "What?" Jim questioned. "Get up Jim." Joker said, Jim got up and walked to Joker, "What then?" Jim said, slightly annoyed. Joker put out his finger towards a shop, "Oh, Jimmy boy lets get some beer." He said slightly bouncing like a child, "Really Joker." Jim said taking his helmet off showing and showing his expression. "Hey, I have been stuck in a pod, I deserve a drink." Joker said taking his rifle and breaking the window. Jim sighed following Joker, "Why do you need beer Joker?" Jim said standing next to Joker as he looked over the beers. "Why not? I'm a marine, I like beer, and I outrank you, so what I say goes." Joker said, patting his shoulder where the Sergeant symbol was. "I still can't believe you are a ODS trooper and a Sergeant," Jim said to him, Joker looked back at him and shoved a case of beer into Jims arms, "Believe it Private Jimmy," Joker said smiling, "Now were is that whiskey?" Once Joker finished pouring whiskey into his flask and hiding it back into his pants pocket he walked up to Jim and patted his shoulder. "March," Joker said putting his helmet back on, "I will cover you. You have precious cargo." Jim sighed.

It took them two hours to get back to the hotel, Jim looked to Joker, "Don't shoot the Sangheilis Joker," Joker looked at Jim, "Oh Jimmy

boy did you get me one too?" Joker said laughing. Jim walked up the stairs to the lobby and set the beer down on the floor, "Well I guess Joker was thirsty." Zach said looking at Jim as he took his helmet off, "Yeah he was," Jim said walking over to him, Jim looked at the Sangheili who was now resting on the couch, "How is she?" Zach looked at Jim, "She will be fine," Zach said, "Only a broken rib and a hell of a lot of bruises and cuts." "Rha' Grioto said they heal fast. So I'm not too worried." Zach said looking at Joker who now walked in taking his helmet off. Zach snapped to attention and saluted him, "Really Zach? Don't do that." Joker said waving his hand. Joker walked over to the television as Zach eased up and walked back to Jim. "Rha' Grioto is taking a shower," Zach said to Jim, "all right," he said looking over to Joker who flicked the T.V on. "We have power!" Joker said clasping his hands together. Joker flipped through the channels, most of them were emergency broadcasts but Joker found a channel dedicated to ancient shows. "Hey Jim look, star trek." Joker said looking at Jim; he looked at the T.V showing the episode where Kirk called the doctor bones, Joker sat down on the couch sliding the beer to him. Joker began to drink while watching the show that was very cheesy, "Zach. Where is the marine?" Jim said looking at the television. "He is in his room next to the room you slept in." Zach said. "He looks pissed mate."

Jim knocked on the door, "What is it?" came a angry English voice, "Michael, I would like it if you came out." Jim said back through the door. Jim heard the boots of the marine walk to the door; he opened the door showing his gruff face, "Why?" He said rubbing his new scar that is now scabbing over, "I was wondering if you want to watch television, I don't care much for it but it might help you ease in here." Jim said scratching his face. The marine looked at Jim still holding resentment in his eye's, he pushed passed Jim and walked to the lobby. Jim looked back to him and sighed, he walked over to the bedroom he was in last night and took off his upper armor. He heard the shower in the bathroom still going so he placed a towel next to the bathroom door. Jim rested his armor on the bed and sat down in the chair next to the bed. He took his rifle and began to clean off the dirt that had stuck in it even as it had rained. He finished and placed the AR on the bed. Jim rubbed his face and grabbed his backpack. He rifled through his bag, pulling out a small book about an ancient war.

Jim heard the shower stop, he got up and walked to the door, "Rha' Grioto I left a towel for you," Jim said, "Thank you Jim," she said back, and Jim walked out of the door. Jim walked back to the lobby holding his book firmly in his hand. Jim peered into the room where Joker was sitting and Zach was talking to the marine. Joker looked at Jim, "Hey there Jimmy," Joker said placing his now empty can down. Jim walked over to the couch and sat down. Zach walked over and sat on the floor next to the couch, "Well Jimmy," Joker said looking towards Jim, "Did you see puss now?" Jim looked at him, "Really Joker?" Jim said, putting his book down.

7. Chapter 7

****Chapter 7****

****Rude awaking****

Rha' Grioto walked into the lobby, she looked over at Zach who was

sleeping and noticed the marine walking to her. He stopped In front of her and growled and then pushed her in his usual manner while mumbling insults. She looked over to where Jim was sitting. He looked at her and smiled, he patted next to him signaling her to sit next to him. Joker sighed and opened his third can of beer sipping loudly which jerked Zach awake. "Damn it Joker. I was dreaming about this damn war being over!" Zach said, wiping the little bit of drool that was on the corner of his mouth. Joker rolled his head towards him sneering, "Now, now there will be time for that when it's late at night." Joker said, he looked at his watch and groaned; it was only 3:00pm, "Damn it's been a long day." Joker said, watching Rha' Grioto sit next to Jim. Zach got up and yawned, "Jim when do you think we will get a evac?" Zach said looking out the window, "I don't know Zach, we're supposed to find civilians, If there are any." Jim said melancholy looking out the window too. Joker chimed in, "Hell they wouldn't leave a squad of Moonlighters out here. We are the elite!" Joker said puffing his chest out. "Oorah!" Jim and Zach said in unison. Rha' Grioto looked at them and tilted her head, Joker looked over and saw this, "Jimmy you have a funny gal here," Joker said smiling and setting his beer down. Jim turned to Joker, "Oh, yeah, she does that. I find it cute." Jim said. Jim looked at Joker and noticed he said something that he would regret. "Oh, Jimmy boy," Joker said standing up and squinting. He began to walk in front of Jim and Rha' Grioto in a strict military fashion. "So, Jim you find that cute eh?" Joker said kneeling in front of them.

Jim became red and began to sweat slightly, Joker squinted, "Jim, you said cute, what do you mean by that?" Joker said, looking at Jim, "I just found it cute," Jim said, looking back at Rha' Grioto who now looked just as confused and scared as him. "Well," Joker said, now showing a smile, "Good for you, Jim I knew you'd nock yourself a girl," Joker said standing up smiling and smacking Jim leg. Jim was confused and began to stand up too. "Wait, what was with that?" Jim asked very confused, "Oh just pestering you," Joker said sticking his thumb under his chin, "You already gave me enough to know what's up here." Jim looked at Joker dumbfounded, "What?" "Oh, don't be coy, I know you like her." Joker said looking at Rha' Grioto who looked surprised, "Jim, I know more than you know," Joker said smiling. Jim opened his mouth but couldn't speak showing Joker enough that he was right. "Well Jim, thanks for clearing that up," Joker said walking up to Zach who was now near the Sangheili. Jim looked back at Rha' Grioto and tried to speak but still he was quiet.

"Jim," Zach said jerking Jim's attention from Rha' Grioto to him, "Get over here she is waking up." Jim and Rha' Grioto walked over to the couch to the elite, her eye's shot opened and once she saw Joker she grabbed his throat and hoisted him up spitting at him in Sangheili * **YOU FILTHY HUMAN!** * Joker held her arm and gagged, Rha' Grioto walked up and grabbed her hand, * Stop sister, they are friendly! * Rha' Grioto clicked back in Sangheili. The Sangheili looked at her * **WHAT!** * She let go of Joker who was now rubbing his neck, coughing. The Sangheili looked at Rha' Grioto with anger * **YOU ARE WITH THESE INSECTS! * **She looked at her extremely enraged, Jim walked between them, "Hey, stop yelling at each other and can you speak in our tongue please?" Jim said holding his hands out, "Rha' Grioto can you calm her down please." The Sangheili looked at Jim then back to Rha' Grioto, "You let this human speak to you like that!" She said in English turning purple with anger. Jim looked at her slightly frighten that a conflict might happen, "Please, we are friendly." Jim said calmly, "We mean you no harm." The Sangheili

looked at Jim easing up and then looked back to Rha' Grioto, "You believe this human?" She said still holding anger in her voice, "Yes, this human saved me and he saved you." Rha' Grioto said patting Jim's shoulder pushing him back a-bit. "He is a good guy." Joker said rasping, standing up. "Trust him, he is the nice guy here." Jim looked at the Sangheili who now looked at Jim. "What is your name?" Jim said hoping that she would calm down. The Sangheili looked back at Rha' Grioto twitching her mandibles avoiding the question, making Jim sigh. *** **You trust this human with your life? * The Sangheili said. Rha' Grioto looked at her and then to Jim. Instead of speaking back in Sangheili she spoke in English, "I trust Jim and his fellow comrades." Rha' Grioto looked back at the Sangheili. The Sangheili looked at Jim, "I will take her word human. For now." She said harshly, "My name is Jaja' Mantakrea." She said, still twitching her mandibles in anger. Joker walked up with his hand raised, "Well Jaja', I'm Joker that's Jim," He said pointing towards Jim, "And that short monkey behind you is Zach," He said, pointing behind her. Jaja' Mantakrea looked at Joker as if she had been insulted, "How dare you say Jaja'. **YOU HAVE DISRESPECTED ME!" **Jaja' Mantakrea said posing her self again to grab Joker's throat. Jim walked in front of Joker and Jaja' Mantakrea, "Please Jaja' Mantakrea, he didn't know about your extreme respect for names." Jim said quickly, hoping not to sever an already thin truce. Rha' Grioto walked up behind Jim placing her hands on his shoulders, Jaja' Mantakrea twitched her mandibles and squinted her eyes, "If you want to take a shower, there is one in room fifty-six," Jim said.

Joker watched as Jaja' Mantakrea walked out of the lobby extremely infuriated, he looked back at Jim and Rha' Grioto who were easing up after the small conflict, "Damn Jim, she has a nice ass," Joker said grinning widely, "Joker really! She could have killed you!" Jim said looking at Joker whom wiggled his tongue. Zach walked up behind Jim placing his hand on his shoulder to get his attention, "Jim. The marine was talking about running with Jade squad. He said he will join them when the call back." Zach said looking at Joker walking up to them rubbing his neck "Well if they call him that's fine," Jim said; waving his hand behind him, "We need to get the rest of our squad. That right now is top priority." Jim said, turning to Zach, "Oh, that reminds me," Joker said rubbing his chin, "I heard that Casey is around the Trade Plaza, she found a small group of Swat Police. They also found a few civilians." Jim looked at Joker in surprise, "You waited to tell me this now!" Jim said, pressing his finger on Joker's chest. "Hey, I forgot, besides she told me to find you guys and stay put. She is going to evac the civvies and find the Capt." Joker said, pushing Jim's finger away, "She said she would contact me in thirty five hours." Jim eased back, "How long ago was that?" Jim asked, raising an eyebrow, "Well," Joker said rolling his eyes back, "About three hours before you saved me from my pod and the damn zebra that pestered me." Jim rubbed his face, "Why didn't she broadcast the message to the squad net?" Jim said, slightly annoyed, "Well Jimmy, you and Zach are low ranks," Jim said looking at Zach now, "She entrusts me because I out rank you." "And she thought you died Jim. She saw your pod nearly burn up." Joker said, walking back to the couch.

Jim looked at Zach, "You almost died?" Zach said, worried, "Yeah sorry about not telling you." Zach nodded his head, "Ah, it doesn't matter mate, you're here all right," he said now walking over to Joker.

Jim turned to Rha' Grioto, "Hey, can you see if you can make Jaja' Mantakrea comfortable?" Jim asked, moving his hands a-bit, Rha' Grioto looked at Jim confused, "Jim, I am not gay." Rha' Grioto said looking confused, Jim turned red, "Oh, I am sorry I-I didn't mean it that way." Jim said stuttering. He scratched his face, "I meant like you would talk to her." Rha' Grioto looked at Jim covering her mouth as she laughed. "Jim!" Joker yelled at him, Jim turned around to see what he wanted, "Fuck, Jim! Get your rifle!" Joker yelled as he rushed over and grabbed his rifle. Zach ran over to the couch and grabbed his MS7. Jim heard brutes howling outside, he looked at Rha' Grioto; she grabbed her rifle and looked at him sternly.

End
file.